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Leroy Garrett, Editor

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He Died
for the Church,
To make her
holy and clean,
washed by baptism
and God's Word.

Eph. 5:25-26

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The Church of Christ: Yesterday and Today . . .

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH

We believe in the one holy, catholic and apostolic church.

In our first essay on this statement from the Apostles' Creed we gave our reasons for believing that the Church of Christ must be *catholic* if it is what God intends. This time around we are looking at the *holiness* of the church, believing that this too is one of its necessary characteristics.

God has acted in man's behalf in order to make man holy. This is to make man like Himself, for He is the Holy One. Early in His dealings with Israel there was the command "Be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44), which must have been distressing to a people with such a limited conception of the nature of God. Those words come alive with excitement for the Church of Christ in that it can look to Jesus as the revelation of God's holiness.

This is the force of 1 Pet. 1:15-16 where this instruction in *Leviticus* is quoted. Peter points to Jesus Christ as the source of holiness: "Gird up your minds, be sober, set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"

The Israelites could, 'of course, understand such language as "You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls upon the earth," which was an expansion of the command to be holy, but they could hardly be expected to contemplate the holiness of God. What a, difference Jesus makes! He could say to his disciples: "He who has seen me has seen the Father," and "I am in the Father and the Father in me." We see the holiness of God when we see Jesus. And to us the command to be holy even as God is holy is a mandate to be like Jesus.

The holiness of God was a major theme of the prophets. Thirty times or more Isaiah speaks of *the Holy One of Israel.* In looking to a brighter day he says: "In that day men will have regard for their Maker, and their eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 17:7). Ezekiel's description is equally reverential: "My holy name I will make known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let my holy name be profaned any more; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel" (Ez. 39:7). Likewise in Hosea 11:1: "I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come to destroy." Psalms 111:9 worships God with: "Holy and reverend is his name!"

Such prophets would no doubt cringe at some of our superficial references to God, such as “the Man upstairs” and “the Boss.” Perhaps the old orthodox Jews who would not so much as utter God’s special name and would not even write it without first bathing were being overly cautious, but it was an appropriate reverence in spiritual things, but we should be equally cautious to refer to the Holy One with utmost regard. If the name of one’s dead Mother is to be intoned with reverence, should not His Holiness be referred to with the deepest respect? Alexander Campbell once suggested that a brief pause before uttering His name would be appropriate.

In the New Covenant scriptures Jesus is described as *the Holy One of God.* Even the demons recognized him as such: “Ah, what have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God” (Lk. 4:34). Peter said to the murderers of Jesus: “You denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead” (Acts 3:14). And in 1 John 2:20 the believers are told that they have been “anointed by the Holy One.”

In giving us Jesus, the Holy One, God has shown us the way to be holy even as He is holy. The holy church is a church that is like Jesus. In bearing the likeness of Jesus the Church of Christ becomes holy. Heb. 12:11 teaches us that God disciplines us for our good so that we may share in the holiness of Jesus, while 2 Cor. 7:1 urges us to be clean in both body and spirit, “and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.” And Heb. 12:14 is even stronger: “Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” Eph. 4:24 describes the new nature that we have in Jesus as a creation “after the likeness of God in true righreousness and holiness.”

Paul depicts the holiness of the church in terms of the relationship between man and wife. Christ is the head of the church as the husband is of the wife; the church is subject to Christ as the wife is to the husband. And then he speaks of the cord that binds: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word” (Eph. 4:25-26) *To sanctify* means to make holy. Jesus made the church holy through love, by giving himself up for her.

The apostle goes on: “That he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” The church is therefore holy because it is one with Jesus, subject to him, purchased by him, separated from the carnal world.

The church is holy when it is filled with him, filled with the Spirit of holiness. It is thus appropriate that the Guest of heaven, sent by Jesus to comfort us in his absence, should be designated the *Holy* Spirit. “I go away,” he had to say to his followers, referring to his death and subsequent ascension, “but I will come to you,” he assured them, pointing to the

coming of the Holy Spirit into their lives. When that Spirit fills the church it becomes the holy church.

There in Eph. 5 where Paul speaks of the church as being "holy and without blemish, he also says: "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit." Drunkenness and debauchery thus stand for the world and all its carnality. The believer is not to be like the world. He is rather to be filled with the Spirit, which is the source of his holiness. He is thus one who is Spirit-filled and Spirit-led rather than world-filled and world-led. And so in Rom. 1:4 the apostle refers to "the Spirit of holiness" that motivated Jesus, and it is this holiness that Jesus has given us.

This is why the church is called "holy brethren" in Heb. 3:1, "those sanctified in Christ Jesus" in 1 Cor. 1:2, and "a holy "nation" in 1 Pet. 2:9. Especially noteworthy is that the church is likened to a *temple,* the place where God resides. "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are" (l Cor. 3:16-17). In Eph. 2:21 Paul likens the church to a building, with Jesus as the cornerstone, and says: "in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

This is saying that God makes us holy by dwelling in us through the Holy Spirit, the church thus becoming His holy temple. There can hardly be a more glorious concept of the church than that. And in 1 Cor. 6:19 the apostle makes it clear that it is each believer that becomes God's dwelling place: "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." This should make it clear that if a church has a "sanctuary," it is not some large room with stained glass windows, but its people in whom the Spirit of God dwells.

All this should have a sobering effect upon the Church of Christ of today. Once believers realize that they are a sanctuary of God, filled with the Spirit of holiness, their lives should indeed be glorious demonstrations of the gentle and loving Jesus. People that are selfish, proud, and carnal cannot be the true church. People who allow opinionism and the party spirit to disrupt the fellowship of the Spirit cannot be the real Body of Christ.

The difference between the church and the world must become more apparent. The heavenly character of the religion of Jesus must not be veiled by the garb of expedient conformity to worldly maxims and interests. Restoration on paper and in speech is one thing, but restoration of the heart and mind to God is something else. From theory we must move to a practice that lives, moves, and acts upon the stage of time, giving witness to the *power* of religion in men's lives.

Personal holiness should be a burning desire in each disciple of Jesus. To be like him should be our highest ambition. Indifference to the promises we make and the debts we incur makes us unholy. Insensitivity to the sufferings and feelings of others while we proudly pursue our own welfare only grieves the Spirit of God. Habits such as smoking and gluttony offend the holiness of God. Envy, jealousy and haughtiness but wound the likeness of Christ within us. Holiness is a grace cultivated by prayer, reading, and self-scrutiny, and it is only for those who truly seek to be like God. It calls for self-denial as well as self-examination. It calls for forgetting self in a ministry to others.

The Church of Christ must be known by the world for its sincerity, devotion, piety, and holiness. An assembly of yawning and bored people who are but participants in a weekly ritual is hardly a display of holy religion. Nor is a people with but passing interest in social justice and world problems. A holy people is a concerned people, and they are activists and not mere theorists. It is the holiness of our lives and not the persuasiveness of our doctrines that will touch people's hearts, and it is the *heart* that we must reach and not the head only. Paul told Timothy: "Set the believers an example in speech; and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." These come from the heart, and when people see the exemplary life at work and in the home they know it is for real.

There are those ministers who may be unimpressive in pulpit performance, but their lives are so exemplary and their service to humanity so gracious that what they say or how they say it is not all that important. There are others who are such pulpit generals as to impress the most elegant courtroom orators, but whose lives are such question marks as to negate their most sanguine sermons. There is no 'way to value the power of a Christ-centered life, whether it be reflected in the pulpit, at the factory, or in the home. Any woman is judged more by the way she treats her children, controls her temper, responds to her husband, and behaves in a crowd than by the frequency of church attendance. There is power in a changed life, and one serious problem we have is that the Church of Christ of today is filled with people with unchanged lives. Jesus has not made much of a difference.

We must cultivate *heart* religion, rooted in the feelings and affections. Heart religion makes for moral life and health. It animates and inspires our noblest impulses, and it gives the soul divine life, planting within it the incorruptible seeds of a glorious immortality. The holy life is life indeed, and it touches all that a man is, all that he has, and all that he desires. Its power shines the brightest when it is oppressed, and all of life's difficulties only impart to it a peculiar luster and heroism. —*the Editor*

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SINCERITY AS BASIS OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD

When I read the proposition from Alexander Campbell sometime back that sincerity is the basis of one's acceptance before God, I had misgivings as to its soundness. But the more I ponder the thesis the more convinced I am of its truth, especially in view of Campbell's definition of sincerity.

Certainly he did not see sincerity as some pusillanimous attitude that lamely defends itself with "If I think I'm right, then I'm right." Many there are who are satisfied with what they believe, who are not open to new ideas, and who do not want their convictions challenged. True, such ones may have *convictions,* but people are not truly sincere who are unwilling to examine their convictions. In Campbell's vocabulary sincerity is a big word, one that can hardly be applied to those who so love the *status quo* that they resist all change. Such people are, of course, often respectable citizens and sometimes members of the Christian community, and it seems appropriate to describe them as *sincere.* But in such instances we might use the term too lightly.

Most of us have been taught that sincerity is no test of truth, no evidence of correctness of conduct. After all, one can *sincerely* take poison, thinking it is the needed medicine, only to reap a dire consequent. As the wise Solomon declares: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death." Most of us agree that to be right one must be sincere, for insincerity makes no one's list of virtues; and yet one might be sincere and still be wrong. Most people are conscientious in what they do, whether it is trusting a friend or taking a new job, but they often discover that they were wrong.

All this is commonplace to life and it is folly to belabor the point. It is in applying this kind of thinking to religion (or one's relationship to God) that we may be missing the mark. We seem to assume that God disapproves of us if we are wrong. If this is true, then with whom could He possibly be pleased? If our relationship with God is dependent on being exactly right, like taking the proper medicine, then who can be saved? God has acted in our behalf is spite of our *wrongness.* "But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Are we not always sinners in need of God's mercy? Are we not always wrong in His sight, stumbling souls in constant need of His grace?

Then what is the basis of our acceptance with God, whether *in* or *out* of the Body of Christ. Alexander Campbell says it is sincerity, and I agree. He does not say that sincerity makes one right about this or that idea or act, but *right with God.* Nor does he say that sincerity makes one a Christian, for this is dependent upon faith and obedience. One may be sincere and not yet have reached the point of faith, which would make him an *unbeliever* but not a *disbeliever.* The unbeliever does not· believe because he has not yet heard, or if he has heard he does not understand for some reason. Such a one is never condemned in

scripture. It is the disbeliever, the one who hears and understands but *rejects*, that is condemned.

Jesus says in John 12:48: "He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day." Does the man who does *not* reject, having never heard or understood, have a judge? To the hypocrites Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains" (Jn. 10:4). The Lord could hardly have meant that they would really have had no sin if they were blind, for all are in sin. He is really saying that if they were *sincere* their sin would not be held against them, which they weren't. In John 15:22 he says: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin."

The one who is sincere towards God, then, is one who loves Him and seeks to do His will. He is one who hungers and thirsts for righteousness. Psa. 34:18 describes him: "The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, and saves the crushed in spirit." And in Psa. 51:17: "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Isa. 57:15 is so explicit as to identify the man who will inhabit eternity with God: "For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite." And Isa. 66:2 almost puts it in the words in the title of this essay: "This is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."

All this is to define sincerity. Paul saw himself as sincere before God all along: "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience up to this day" (Acts 23:1). Again in Acts 26:9 he says to King Agrippa: "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth." And so he was "zealous for God" all his life (Acts 22:3). So bad was his conduct toward the disciples that he describes himself as "the foremost of sinners," but goes on to say: "But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief" (l Tim. 1:13).

Saul of Tarsus was God's man all along precisely because he sincerely sought after God. When God acted he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, and in the experience he learned the meaning of grace. "The grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 1:14), and he concluded that such grace and mercy came his way so that "Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience for an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life" (1 Tim. 1:16).

We are talking about a blasphemer and a murderer, one who even dared to destroy the Church of Christ on earth. Such a one received mercy because he was sincere. So the test of a man's relationship with God cannot be how much he knows or how right he is, but how he responds when God reaches out for him.

The point of this lesson comes home to us who are in Christ as much as to those in the world. As you sit there reading the words upon this page, what do you consider the basis of your acceptance with God? It can hardly be that you have been baptized, or that you pray, or that you attend the assembly. Surely there are many who do all these things and more who are not acceptable to God. When a man does all that is commanded of him, he is still an unprofitable servant, our Lord teaches. Works *per se* do not merit God's favor. 1 Cor. 13 teaches that one may even give his body to be burned and still gain nothing, if it is not with love. That gets close to the point we are making: when *sincerity* leads one to offer his body — or to be baptized or to pray — then God is pleased. And if sincerity is never blessed with such knowledge, but is hungering and seeking, God must still be pleased.

We should search our souls to be sure that we have that "love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith" (1 Tim. 1:5). Church membership is no sure sign of a sincere faith. Webster sees the word to mean "without deceit, pretense, or hypocrisy," and he adds "being the same in actual character as in outward appearance." Our profession is for real if we are sincere. Our knowledge may run shallow, but deep inside we love God and seek Him above all else. Our errors may be many, perhaps even gross (like a prostitute's), but in our heart of hearts we long for a change in our lives and we want to drink of His goodness.

Someone has suggested that those who go to heaven may be in for three surprises: over those who are there, over those who are *not* there, and over ourselves being there! Surprises or not, it is not likely that even one insincere person will be there. On the contrary it is inconceivable that anyone who has sincerely longed for God in his life will be in hell. If this should be the case, my conception of God would have to undergo a dramatic change.

This is to say that people are not going to be saved because they are church members or have kept commandments, more or less. They will be saved by God's grace through Jesus Christ. Such grace is for those who really want God. It is noteworthy that Paul wanted the Corinthians to give to the poor so that they could prove that their love was sincere (2 Cor. 8:8), and in Eph, 6:24 he speaks of those who "love our Lord Jesus Christ with a sincere love." In 2 Cor. 1:12 he sees "godly sincerity" as a necessity virtue.

I wish for my people what Paul wished for the Corinthians, that they might "Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be fresh dough" (l Cor. 5:7). I would say to our churches what he said to that one: "Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

The context has to do with the love feast and the Lord's Supper, but I see "Let us celebrate the festival" as a reference to the whole of our life in Jesus, which is surely celebration. Ah, but the malice .and evil that has soiled our way, with all the strife and division. Ah, but the infatuation with the world that has made our profession of spiritual things less than transparent.

Dear one, does your heart yearn for God. It is here that God accepts you, and once He accepts you, His kindly light leads on to higher climes. Like the torch that shines more brightly the more it is shaken, the more you seek God the fuller He will fill you with His love and goodness. —*the Editor*

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THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN ON REFORMATION

One of my favorite writers in Restoration literature is Robert Richardson, who was Alexander Campbell's physician as well as his biographer. His large two-volume work on the *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* has long been the authoritative study on Campbell's life. He was a co-editor and general associate with Mr. Campbell, conducting his affairs at home during many of his journeys. Richardson's presence in the village of Bethany was reassuring, and he was known as the beloved physician on horseback, with his top hat and medical case. It was he who was called to the Campbell home in an effort to save young Wycliffe, who was drowned while his father was in Europe, and it was he who ministered to the dying Campbell.

But Richardson is much more than this in Restoration history, for he was an astute thinker, an effective teacher (serving as the *first* "professor of chemistry" in American education at Bethany College), a minister of the Word, and a writer who probably excelled both of the Campbells. The new science hall at Bethany appropriately bears his name. He had deep insights into the implications of the Movement, and he was more discerning than was Campbell in detecting the hazards. It was he who urged Campbell *not* to affirm in his debate with Rice that the Spirit operates through the Word alone. He often served as the balance wheel between extreme views, and he was alert to point out that leaders in the Movement sometimes made so much of their opinions as to violate the very principles they were advocating. And during a period when the Holy Spirit was studied only in his role in conversion, it was Richardson who published a book on the work of the Spirit in which he reviewed the Spirit's mission in the life of the believer.

But this is not intended as a study of Richardson himself, though I did publish an extended piece on *The Role of Robert Richardson in the Restoration Movement* in the 1961 edition of this journal. It is rather to point to a series of articles he did in the *Millennial*

Harbinger from 1847 to 1850 entitled "Reformation" which extended through 19 installments and dealt with the principles then being promulgated. One will not find a more pungent and reasonable presentation of "our position" than these essays, and those who are interested in republishing the best of our pioneers would do well to consider this. He also has extended treatments, running through several volumes, on such subjects as unity, fellowship, self-improvement, history of the disciples, and even a series on "Christian Knockings."

The series on reformation (Campbell and Richardson both, as most of our pioneers, used *reformation* to describe their efforts more than restoration) sets forth many vital principles, often couched in pithy language. *That alone which saves men can unite them,* said the beloved physician as he discounted the value of theological speculation. *Let the Bible be our spiritual library; but let the Gospel be our standard of orthodoxy,* he said in distinguishing between the gospel and biblical doctrines, a difference our generation is slow to learn. In this context he points out that the early church could not have united on the "Bible alone," for it had no Bible, certainly not the New Testament. But it did unite upon the "Gospel alone."

He also recognized the gradual and progressive nature of reform, that no man or institution is ever completely reformed. It is a relative experience at best, for no mind, however acute, can comprehend at a glance the whole system of divine truth. The doctor here shows his respect for the "eminent and pious of any age" who have struggled for truth. Rather than to reprove or ignore them we should build upon their labors, thankful for the progress they made.

In one essay the doctor observed that reformation must begin in each man's heart, that spiritual progress is largely a matter of choosing between the materialism of this world and the fruit of the Holy Spirit. *Heaven attracts him by its glories, or earth deludes him with its toys.*

He chided the Protestant world of his day for renouncing papal authority for the sake of individual conscience and then turning creeds and clerics of their own invention for their authority. *With what consistency can we reject a decision of the Pope and yet submit to one of the Primate?* He strongly insisted that individual liberty can be preserved in a unity that is based upon the pure gospel, consigning all theories and speculation to the area of personal opinion.

But the one principle that he considered most vital to Christian union is *a generalization of Christianity.* By this he meant a well-balanced acceptance of the whole of Christianity, apart from those peculiarities that disunite and mark out sects. Sectism emerges when people place undue value on some tenets of the Bible to the neglect of others. It is the partial view of things and the elevation of controverted questions to an undeserved conspicuity that has given us partyism, he insisted. So, one can have a sect without

adopting any error, but by making too much of what is true in its proper place. *Partyism is always worse in proportion as its favorite dogmata are remote from the grand essential features of Christianity.*

He also noted that while a truth may be *relatively* important it does not follow that it is *intrinsically* important. The important question is not the one Pilate asked, *What is truth,* but What is *the* truth? It was to this that Jesus spoke: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to *the* truth." The doctor complained that religionists have long asked *What is true doctrine?,* and whatever was adjudged to be true has been made an article of faith and a test of communion. But they should ask *What is the important truth?* or *What is the gospel?,* and make only that the basis of union.

A survey of church history will confirm the doctor's analysis of the rise of sects on the ground of only *partial* acceptance of Christianity, with an overemphasis on that which is accepted. This he called sectism through synecdoche. Sects have emerged by "majoring" in missions, baptism, the Holy Spirit, church government, holiness, an exclusive name, the mother of Jesus, ministry of healing, tongues, etc. Even the Bible is some time made an end rather than a means, resulting in *bibliolatry* . Not many of us have discerned, as did Dr. Richardson, that even a truth can be so overstressed as to be made into an error, which often results in a sect. It is this balance, this generalization of the Christian faith, that the doctor would persuade upon our current Holy Spirit movement.

Reformation's loftiest principle is love, which, according to the apostle binds everything together in perfect harmony, and the doctor saw significance in Paul's point that love is even greater than faith. Yet the divines, said he, make "faith" — *orthodox belief* — greater than love, for they will sacrifice the love that unites and sympathizes for the sake of orthodoxy. He deplored the tragedy of "correct views in religion" being made more important than that love that reaches out and claims a man because he is a beloved brother. He identified one cost of partyism: *when the instrument is regarded as greater than the work it is to accomplish, and the means are accounted superior to the end.* How often in our own time do we see the grand end of brotherly love sacrificed for the sake of "pure doctrine."

Richardson could not write at length on reformation without a reference to the principle of sound words, the calling of Bible things by Bible terms. It is in turning from "wholesome words, even the words of the Lord Jesus Christ" that men uphold their opinions and build parties. It is the *science* of theology that has produced the *systems* of religion. Each system must have its own nomenclature. "Nature is a revelation of *things,*" he observed, "but religion is primarily a revelation of *words."* In nature man is to find words for things, but in religion he finds things for words. Nature has her sciences, and so

words may change to meet the new findings. But in religion, where words reveal things, a change of language necessarily involved a change of things.

By both conviction and temperament a man of peace, Dr. Richardson stressed that the reformation he and others had launched was originally intended, not for destruction, but for conciliation. He regretted that there were so many who rejoiced in skinning the sects, supposing that destruction is reformation. “It is not the mission of the reformation to carry on a crusade against the peculiar opinions or doctrines of any party in particular, or of all parties in general. Such a purpose formed no part of the original plan, but, on the contrary, is directly inconsistent with it, and calculated to pervert its influence and utterly frustrate its proper designs. It was not intended as an aggressive movement.”

He went on to insist that the Movement did not propose to debate the merits or demerits of any existing creed, but to take a position far above party strife, moving “in the pure heaven of divine truth and beneath the undimmed splendor of the sun of original Christianity.”

Reformation asks man to make a simple choice, though a weighty one: *to love Jesus more than he loves his theories.* Here the doctor stood where we should all stand. Now that the Movement that Richardson labored for is itself torn by partyism, we should come to terms with that same choice. *Do we love Jesus more than our own party?* If we really do, then the character of reformation that he envisaged can be realized in our own lives and in the institutions we serve. —*the Editor*

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AN EVENING WITH ART LINKLETTER

Denton is a quiet little city of education, culture, and business, with little going on that is particularly newsworthy. But we do have occasional visits from VIP’s, especially for the annual dinner meeting of the Chamber of Commerce. This is a gathering of upwards of 1,000 of our leading citizens, mostly business people. The price for the dinner is costly enough to bring in a name speaker, and the occasion has enough flair to give the gals a place to wear their best. The visitors this time were Art and Lois Linkletter. Ouida and I probably would not have attended except for the kindly grace of the printer of this journal, Terrill Wheeler, and his wife Wilma, our kind of people to be sure.

lt was a good idea, for we were able to see all in one place a number of former business associates, and of course to see and hear in person Art Linkletter, who is really something else. Besides, it gave my lovely wife a chance to wear some of the accessories that I have brought to her from remote places of the world. Especially elegant was the necklace and earring set, handmade by the ladies of the First Christian Church in Miami. Her black

stole, trimmed in gold flake, I bought in a quaint little shop in Hong Kong. I do believe that Ouida was more beautiful that evening than the night I married her 29 years ago. And did she ever enjoy Art Linkletter! But he was barely better than the beef we were served — real *beef* — and not chicken! — something rare for us these days since we have long since joined the boycott. In fact, we started it! Ouida anticipated the high prices and filled our freezer with beef cuts. She was keeping the hoarders from getting it! But in a family of five what one lays by does not last long.

One of the finest compliments Art Linkletter ever received is one he never heard. When I was at MacMurray College in Illinois, an English professor and I were team-teaching an orientation course for freshmen. We were in a unit on communication, and the professor was giving the kids some tips on how to convey their ideas. "You may not be able to be an …" He paused, as if searching for the right example to place before them "… an Art Linkletter, but you can at least improve." The reference to Art Linkletter in that context rather surprised me, for I expected him to come out with someone like T. S. Eliot or William Faulkner. Art Linkletter I had associated with radio and TV "house parties" and the ladies. I didn't realize sophisticated English profs knew about him, and especially that they were "impressed by him.

I thought of that professor as Art got up to speak to Denton's affluent — an all white audience of course. I readily agree that he is a master at communication, and I found myself in search of his secret. Perhaps he revealed the secret when he said at the outset, "I don't make speeches, I simply talk to friends." Ouida says it is his folksy approach, that it is as if he were in your own livingroom. Wilma Wheeler thinks it is what he says, his frankness, that he somehow gets by with what others never could.

I found myself thinking of preachers, of how most of them could learn so much from this guy who really has the cool before an audience. Shouting preachers. Blasting preachers. Judgmental preachers. The declaimers and the orators, and all those that wear out an audience if not themselves. And in an important sense Art Linkletter is a "preacher" — certainly he is a minister to the needs of our ailing society, especially to youth and to parents.

I detect that Art does not change when he steps into the "pulpit." He continues in the same conversational tone that he had back in the coffee lounge or in the automobile on the way to the auditorium: Only if our preachers would forget about sermonizing or speech making and simply talk to folk about the great truths of the Christian faith! I often think of the wail of a New York businessman, "*Must* we have sermons?" But that businessman would never say that about preachers who have what Art Linkletter has. The "sabbatical tone" has disheartened many a church-goer.

Art comes through to me as a man who cares. His concern is evident. He is on your side. He may zero in on your shortcomings and point up our national sins, but you find yourself accepting it. And the guy closed his remarks with "I love you," which somehow seemed appropriate even when coming from a professional entertainer.

One of his secrets is that he teaches his lessons through storytelling, stories about his own experiences and the people he meets. In his talks around the country on drug abuse, he has been approached by many a parent with all kinds of questions. One mother went to him after one of his presentations, insisting that her family was together in the evenings a lot, as he had suggested, and still her kids were getting out of hand. "What do you do together"," I asked her. "We watch TV together," was her reply. "But you don't really share together in serious conversation," was Art's reply.

Another parent insisted that they were setting the right example, that their children had never seen *them* on dope. "Are you sure?," said Art. "How much drinking do you do? *Alcohol* is a drug, you know. And how about barbituates and sleeping pills?"

What a wise approach this is! Many, if not most, of the thousand parents that were there could see themselves in these examples. Art did not have to upbraid them for neglecting their kids or setting a bad example by their personal habits. He only needed to add the fact that a recent sociological study revealed that the average family spends no more than 17 *minutes* a week together in serious conversation. Had we been rebuked we might have left discouraged. But through his folksy storytelling about *others* he encouraged us to get with it and try to do better. By suggesting that the drug problem, the crime problem, and the "runaway" problem are basically caused by a lack of communication at the family level he laid the crisis of this generation *in our own laps* — and he had us laughing while he did it!

He reminisced about his long life as an entertainer, which has taken him from such bizarre surroundings as a leper colony ("The most appreciative audience. I ever had") to the elegance of the White House, where he has entertained four presidents. But it was his stories about his interviews with children that greatly amused Ouida, which she always enjoyed on his TV house parties. His favorite interview was with a five-year old Catholic girl, a doll-like beauty. He asked her about her favorite Bible story. *"Edam* and *Ave,"* she said. At Art's urging she explained that these two had this park with a swimming pool. "But they got in trouble with God." Art asked her what happened. "Well, God did two things to them." Art wondered about the *two* things. "Well, first he sent them down to hell!" Art thought this a bit severe coming from a five-year old, but he asked about the other thing God did to them. "Well, after that, he turned them into *Protestants!"*

Then there were the kids that were prompted by their parents what to say or not to say during the interview. Art solved that problem by asking the child what his Mother had told him *not* to say! One boy blurted, "She said I could say anything I wanted to, but don't tell the whole world *that I'm pregnant!"*

There were always those children that talk all day, but once on a TV interview they clam up. Art solved this by introducing the one subject that will get nearly any child to talk: their pets. His favorite question was about the pet's *pedigree*, a term a child hears but does not understand. "Does your dog have a pedigree?" would bring a *yes* or *no*. "How do you know?" really brought the answers. One boy said his dog did have a pedigree, but they had the Vet to cut it off! A little girl explained that her dog must not have one, for it stayed with the neighbor's dog for a month and nothing ever happened. But the answer that puzzled Art was from the boy who said, "No, we're Jewish."

I have long since been convinced that a sense of humor goes with good teaching, but it is even more urgent in human relationships. Families need to laugh together more. And each of us must better learn how to laugh at himself, taking himself less seriously. Art Linkletter, whose own life has been struck by tragedy, is a good example of this. We are all *uptight* about too many things.

Art Linkletter is a man with a message. The message is that our nation is in trouble because of the breakdown of the home, and an important part of the answer is for the family to be together more in meaningful communication. He says: "The time you are with your family is the most important time you spend." With the movies and TV assaulting our children with much unsavory stuff, with a fourth of our families on the move each year, and with a large percentage of mothers at work, the family is in trouble. But Art is an optimist. He believes in our people and our nation, despite all the shortcomings. The "work ethic" made our nation great, and we can now cultivate the tenderer virtues of love, joy, and understanding.

I see another message in Art's life, one especially for the church, and that is that we must enlarge our concept of ministry. Art frequently refers to being the son of a Baptist minister, but is he, really, any less a minister than his father? One certainly does not have to intone religious cliches to be a servant of God, and one of the worst things that could happen to a man like Art; who is out where the people are, would be to confine his labors to the sacred desk.

The modern church must realize that it was not a clerical class that carried the gospel to a lost humanity at the outset, but rather the rank and file of people with burning hearts. Our ministers must be teachers, journalists, plumbers, entertainers, business people, dentists, barbers — everybody from all walks of life — and their message must be the love of God manifest in Jesus Christ.

The first time I heard Art Linkletter in person was in Dallas in the early 1950's before a large afternoon audience of mostly women. The first thing he said, after casually looking over the feminine sea, was: "Boy, there's a lot of dirty dishes in the sinks of Dallas today!"

And there are a lot of dirty dishes around these days for someone to wash. It doesn't help much to fuss about it. Demonstrations, sit-ins, and walk-outs will not clean them, and certainly coping out will not help. We all need to shape up and roll up our sleeves and go to work. Art Linkletter is out where the action is, with his hands deep in the suds, whistling as he goes. Bully for him! —*the Editor*

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GAMES PEOPLE PLAY IN RELIGION

Marvin J. Parrish

Several years ago a prominent psychiatrist, the late Dr. Eric Berne, wrote a book entitled *Games People Play.* He reasoned that people often interact with each other in a highly predictable game-like fashion. The games people play are usually poor substitutes for honest human relationships. Dr. Berne catalogued a large number of such games and his contributions have been widely used by psychotherapists. The analysis of game-playing in human interactions is an integral part of *transactional analysis*, the name Dr. Berne gave to his system.

One such game described by Dr. Berne is "See What You Made Me Do" (SWYMD). This particular game is a popular one. It occurs in a variety of circumstances and can be played by almost anyone, such as the man of the house who is out in his shop driving some finishing nails into a future cabinet. His wife comes out to ask him for some change to pay the paper boy. The man's cabinet-making has not gone well up to this point. When his wife intrudes, he misses the nail, smashes his finger with the hammer, and screams, "See what you made me do!" The man was just waiting for a scapegoat and his wife's appearance supplied that need.

Having acknowledged my debt to Dr. Berne I will consider some games people play in religion.

Many of us play the game "Show Humility and Meekness" (SHAM). SHAM is extremely difficult to play well. It requires sensitivity and the ability to make subtle discriminations. One really has to know his audience. If he overplays it, he will defeat his purpose. If he tries too hard, he will lose the game. The trick is that one must make it look like he is winning accidentally — and even unknowingly. Fortunately, really being meek

and humble does not constitute a game. SHAM is a game because of the player's conscious and well-practiced affectation of these qualities.

Another game, played particularly well by Church of Clirist people, is "Have A Scripture Handy" (HASH). This game assumes that there is a precise scriptural answer for all questions. Some argue that this game is a derivative of "Speak Where The Bible Speaks; Be Silent Where The Bible Is Silent." HASH supporters generally agree that these two games are related, but promote HASH as a safer and more direct way of answering questions. They argue that "Speak … Be Silent" does not adequately rule out the possibility that "opinions of men" might creep into our pronouncements unawares. In addition, they argue that "Speak … Be Silent" is not a scriptural phrase and thus sets a dangerous precedent.

There are several theories as to why Church of Christ folk take to HASH so well. One theory is that we have learned the truth of the old adage, "Things are easier said than done." Others claim that our HASHplaying preeminence results from an unconscious attempt to return to the letter of the law. The spirit of the law, these theorists contend, is feared because of the current unrest over ideas about the Holy Spirit.

Although HASH is a popular game among our people, it is not without its detractors. These detractors argue that HASH results in an unprincipled melange of out-of-context quotations. There is also the complaint that HASH is a piecemeal account of Christianity. However, since the game is relatively simple to play and requires little careful thinking, it will undoubtedly continue.

A number of games revolve around the concept of truth. Our people have excelled in playing a variety of these truth games. These games suppose that the Church of Christ has a monopoly on truth, while others have mere fragments or none at all. Such truth games make excellent *party* games.

One such game is "Preach All Truth, Mine Especially" (PAT ME). PAT ME is played in a number of ways, for there is disagreement among its adherents as to the rules. Preachers are often adept at this game. When a congregation's direction changes with each new preacher, one can be reasonably certain that PAT ME has been played repeatedly. However, one need not be a preacher to play the game. PAT ME has demonstrated its divisive powers among players of all types and persuasions. It has been known to split churches and alienate Christians from each other. In fact, the game of PAT ME has helped divide the entire religious world.

Another truth game, designed to correct the deficiencies inherent in PAT ME, is "Preach All Truth; Convert All Denominational Sinners" (PAT CADS). Although PAT CADS is widely accepted, it has the same pitfalls as PAT ME. Critics have even argued that the two games are indistinguishable. We have been slow in recognizing our own game

of PAT ME while accusing others of such game-playing. While we admit our practice of PAT CADS, we have failed to see its game like qualities and its relationship to PAT ME.

This can be seen in some minor games which together provide the essential ingredients for the larger game. The adept PAT CADS player may propose that he and a potential convert "Talk, Reason, And Pray Together" (TRAPT). This game is particularly enjoyable when it is played against someone with little experience. It is most fulfilling when one of our members plays against a denominationalist. For the best results the Christian should propose the idea of playing TRAPT while a game of SHAM is in progress. Once the game of TRAPT has been successfully sprung on the unsuspecting sinner, he is ready prey for the game of "God Refuses A Sinner's Prayer" (GRASP). At this point one should very quickly merge into the game of "I'm Right On (any topic under discussion). Not You" (IRONY). To insure success it may be necessary to follow IRONY with several quick games of HASH. So, begin with SHAM and proceed until he is TRAPT. Then GRASP him and end with IRONY and HASH. We would do well to put our entire line of truth games under the IRONY label. Everyone would probably make his own rules, but at lease we would have the right name!

Perhaps I have been satirical, but the point I wish to emphasize is that manipulation, subterfuge, and brainwashing should not be necessary to people who claim to have access to the power of Jesus. Games and gimmicks compromise the ultimate value of our ministry. If we cannot demonstrate the meaning of the Christian commitment by the example of our own lives, then all the cleverness in the whole world will not help us bring it to someone else. *—Marvin Parrish is in graduate study in psychology at Washington University. His address:325 Mueller A ve., St. Louis 63135.*

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

The Westview Church of Christ in Plano (near Dallas) recently drew up a Statement of Mission and Fellowship. Its inclusion here may cause others to look at their own attitudes and work more critically, not to mention its reflection of our changing brotherhood.

> This congregation of the Lord's body is committed to a witness of Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the Gospel and the provision of social service.

> We believe that we have been called by God into fellowship with all those who have responded in faith to the Good News of Jesus and who have been immersed upon the basis of their trust that Jesus is God's son and the Messiah.
>
> We believe that the unity of the Spirit is based upon community, not conformity; therefore, the only unity attainable by thinking men is unity in diversity.
>
> As free men and women in Christ, we take the position that the basis of unity and the ground of fellowship must be Jesus and the response to Him. We respect the freedom of opinion of individual Christians regarding all other religious matters. Accordingly, we recognize that there will be honest differences of opinion regarding such issues as church organization, worship, and moral conduct. Decisions in these areas affecting the congregation as a whole will be based upon New Testament principles and examples.
>
> As a service oriented congregation anxious to witness for Christ, we pledge that the bulk of our resources will always be focused on people and programs rather than facilities.

There is an important pragmatic value to this kind of a statement. When new people move into an area and are considering where they wish to be members, it would be helpful if there could be a simple and candid statement of the "philosophy" of the congregation. That way each one would know what he is getting into, and there would be fewer unhappy folk in our churches. Let's face it, one Church of Christ these days is often substantially different from the next one (which is a good thing), so each church should make it clear in such a statement the direction it intends to go. Such congregations would also be less likely to change to the whim of every new preacher.

A new book on *Psychopaths* by Alan Harrington lays the blame of increasing psychopathy at the feet of organized religion, charging that the churches have not provided for a real change of lives, especially a *rebirth* experience so badly needed by potential psychopaths. We can sometimes see the signs of this disease among us: feeling of no guilt, believing only in immediate gratification, and no real concern for misery in others. The psychopath, says Harrington, is one who can't love because he was himself unloved in childhood, nor does he have any concern as to whether he is good or bad. His only morality is to do what he wants to do when he wants to do it. While not too hopeful of cure for those so afflicted, he says ways must be found for feelings of rebirth, and it is here that religion should supply the answer.

Older readers will remember Father Charles Coughlin, the controversial Roman Catholic radio speaker of the 1930's, and younger readers will have heard of him. In a recent celebration of his 81st birthday he revealed some things that are really startling,

and, if true, serve as dramatic illustrations of the price of freedom. He now charges that it was Pope Pius XII and President Franklin D. Roosevelt that forced him to end his radio broadcasts in 1940, a program that drew hundreds of thousand of letters a week. Coughlin was highly critical of communist Russia and of our involvement with her in any way. Roosevelt, eager to be an ally with Russia, pressured the Vatican to silence Coughlin. An American cardinal appointed young priests to censure his manuscripts, who scissored them so radically that he was left with nothing to say. Later a federal marshal came with an army truck and carted away all his files, including the subscription list to his paper, *Social Justice*. "It would all make the Watergate scandal look like peanuts," he said. He is presently concerned with satanic influence in the United States, charging that half of the Roman Catholic bishops are under Satan's influence. He made no evaluation of Satan's influence on Protestants!

The Random Road congregation of our folk in Arkansas City, Kansas was recently written up in the local paper for its aid to the community and its uniqueness. One unique feature is its high rate of attendance, with 95% of its members attending each service. And from the reputation this church has it is unlikely that this good attendance is achieved by any kind of pressure, but because of their love for each other and their desire for fellowship. Even more unique is that it spends little money on itself, allowing for a whopping 75% of its income for benevolent work. In 1972, despite its smallness, Random Road gave $10,000 to hospitals, colleges, needy families in their community, Camp Shiloh, and the Salvation Army. They also purchased an automobile for a preacher of the Word who labors beyond their own walls. The church practices mutual sharing in its meetings, Another unique feature, which the writeup did not mention, must be the group's love for giving of its means, which must be an unusually high average per member.

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OFFICE NOTES

Due to some back numbers being lost in the printer's storage room, our bound volume for 1971-72, entitled *The Restoration Mind*, will be later than planned, for some of the issues must be reprinted. But we have plans for a handsome volume, and it will be forthcoming. Those who have ordered will be billed when the book is mailed to you. Others of you who desire this volume should place your order. The price is not yet determined, but it will be nominal for a book of nearly 400 pages.

John R. W. Stott, who ministers to All Souls Church in London, a popular evangelical Anglican church, is doing some unusually fine writing. We commend all his books to you that we have available: *Basic Christianity* (1.50), *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit* (.95), *What Christ Thinks of the Church* (1.50), and *Christ the Controversialist* (2.50). All these really speak to the "now" in terms that mince no words.

For 4.95 we will send you an enlightening volume on *Revolution in Rome* by David Wells. The changes and goings on in the Roman church will astonish you, and yet they are sympathetically handled by the author. As a Roman priest has commented: "Mr. Wells sees quite clearly the major thrusts of post-conciliar Catholicism, both the good and the bad."

Os Guinness is a widely-traveled Englishman who has been an associate with Francis Schaeffer at the L'Abri Fellowship. He has taken a critical look at institutionalism, the drug culture, technology, humanism, violence, and even Satanism and spiritism. In a 420-page book, *The Dust of Death,* he examines the impact of the counter culture and proposes a "Third Way" as the answer to our dying culture. It is a highly informative and interesting volume, and, being paperback, is only 4.95. It is ideal reading for college youth or anyone who seeks an honest appraisal of our predicament and a Christian response.

Francis Schaeffer believes the book of Genesis speaks to the tough questions posed by modern man, being an account of what really happened in the beginning. If you have been exposed to the view that the Bible's first book is but a collection of myths believed by an ancient tribe, then you'll be encouraged by *Genesis in Space and Time* at only 2.25. Along with this, you might also want Schaeffer's *The New Super Spirituality ,* which is a different kind of critique of the new Pentecostalism. Only 75 cents.

We can supply *The Children's Living Bible,* which is the entire Bible beautifully bound and illustrated with unusually attractive pictures. 4.95. And we still insist that you have a copy of the *Declaration and Address* by Thomas Campbell, which includes Barton *Stone's Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery. 1.50.*

E. C. McKinzie, one of our retired ministers, has several thin paperbacks of quips, quotes, and squibs. The one before me has 1800 such and sells for only 1.25. Some are just plain fun: "Some men marry poor girls to settle down, and others marry rich ones to settle up," while others convey wisdom: "Use silence to please never to punish." My boys got quite a bang out of reading them at random at the dinner table. We will fill your order at this office.

Edward Fudge, one of the editors of *Gospel Guardian,* has authored *Our Man in Heaven,* an exposition of the book of Hebrews. Not inclined to worry one with introductory problems (only four pages), Edward gets right into the text, which also benefits from his brevity (162 pages). The ideas are well paragraphed and references are easy to find. And he does not belabor the obvious. His comments are informative and concise. To "sin wilfully," for instance (10:26) is shown to be a continued practice of sin, especially of

disbelief, and not a single act of weakness or ignorance. A surprising, though appropriate, feature is the inclusion of appendices on the priesthood (Edersheim), sacrifice (Vos) and the Day of Atonement (Moses ben Maimon), which reflect the author's concern that the reader have some background for an understanding of the themes of Hebrews. Another pleasant surprise is the Foreword by F. F. Bruce, Rylands professor of biblical criticism at the University of Manchester. This rare outreach of fellowship with those beyond our pale is most encouraging. Bruce sees Hebrews as up-to-date and relevant to our needs, and he commends Fudge's work to that end. All this for only 4.95 in hardback.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

Thanks for an interesting and unbiased paper. Where there is an issue before the brotherhood, I am always interested to see what you have to say about it, not that I always agree. I feel like I could disagree with you on anything without being condemned. — *Lockie King, 2321 W. Swallow, Sebring, Fl. 33870*

I am a young minister who has been asked to leave a congregation partly because of differing doctrinal views. I do not believe the Church of Christ has a monopoly on all the Christians, and I stand firm with a Christ who is directly at work among His people. I am open to whatever the Lord has in mind for me, but I still have the full-time ministry in my blood. Can you please keep your eyes open for a congregation somewhere who is dedicated to Jesus and wants Christian growth above all else. I have a deep love for young people and am leaning more toward this area of work. —*Name and address withheld* (Write to us if you wish to contact this brother. —*Ed.)*

Really appreciated the February issue. Carl's speech on fellowship is worth the whole year's subscription price. Was glad to read Hazelip's response, but it seemed to me that he only raised questions and did not offer an alternative to the question of fellowship … I wonder about your comment that 1 Cor. 13:l0 is a Church of Christ prooftext (that "the perfect" refers to the completion of the NT canon), for Vine's *Dictionary of New Testament Words* suggests this interpretation. But I would follow the same course of conduct that you do, for I do not make tongues an issue over which fellowship should be severed, even though I think the tongues people are self-deluded. —*Darrell Foltz, Box* 562, *Hoxie, Ks. 67740.*

I praise the Lord that He is showing me a very vivid picture of myself so that I might see how many things need to be changed, and how much garbage is still tucked away in the crevices that He insists on tossing out piece by piece. Isn't it just wonderful that He does it all! — *Phylene Pressley, 800* S. *Kern, Maricopa. Ca.* 93252.

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